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ABSTRACT

Certain kinds of extracurricular activities develop interpersonal, leadership, and participatory skills that are important to citizenship and politics. In this research, the focus is on simulated legislative debate and the question is how such activities might contribute to persistent gender differences observed in elite political participation in adulthood. Specifically, gender dynamics, interaction, and success of students participating in a national competition of legislative debate were analyzed. Data came from the 2001 John C. Stennis National Student Congress sponsored by the National Forensic League (NFL). Women are distinctly underrepresented among participants and are significantly less successful in the competition. The young women are less likely to exhibit behaviors high in verbal and nonverbal dominance, but those who engage in aggressive verbal behavior rebutting and referencing others are more likely to be successful. The competitive simulation of legislative debate reproduces gender status hierarchies and rewards masculine behavior in political learning. Includes two notes and four tables. Contains 25 references. (Author/BT)

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Learning and Talking about Politics:

Gender Dynamics, Interaction and Success in NFL Model Congress

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Abstract

Certain kinds of extracurriculars develop interpersonal, leadership, and participatory skills that are important to citizenship and politics (Niemi and Junn 1998, ch. 5; Glanville 1999). **In this research, we focus on simulated legislative debate and ask how such activities might contribute to persistent gender differences observed in elite political participation in adulthood. Specifically, we analyze the gender dynamics, interaction and success of students participating in a national competition of legislative debate. Data come from the 2001 John C. Stennis National Student Congress sponsored by the National Forensic League (NFL).** Women are distinctly under-represented among participants and are significantly less successful in the competition. **The young women are less likely to exhibit behaviors high in verbal and nonverbal dominance, but those who engage in aggressive verbal behavior – rebutting and referencing others – are more likely to be successful.** The competitive simulation of legislative debate reproduces gender status hierarchies and rewards masculine behavior in political learning.

Learning and Talking about Politics:
Gender Dynamics, Interaction and Success in NFL Model Congress

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The National Educational Goals for 2000 adopted by Congress advocate preparing students for responsible citizenship and future political leadership through civic engagement. A variety of governmental agencies, colleges and universities, and nonprofit organizations including the American Political Science Association have adopted initiatives aimed at improving civics education, and advocates acknowledge that "good citizenship does not just happen but is something to be developed" (Niemi and Chapman 1998, 1). Likewise, good political leadership does not just happen but evolves through developmental strategies.

The actual process by which young people develop and acquire political and citizenship skills is less clear than the enthusiasm to do something to promote civic engagement. Scholars of political socialization attend primarily to the role of the family and formal educational processes, and recent studies challenge a longstanding presumption that classroom-based civic education has no significant effect (Galston 2001, 226). Schools serve as laboratories of political learning, encourage students to pay greater attention to politics, help students acquire greater knowledge and promote tolerance (Niemi and Chapman 1998, 30-4). **Recent work suggests that for high school students the classroom can produce gains in civic knowledge (e.g. Conover and Searing 2000; Nie et al 1996).**

A few scholars focus on the role that extra-curricular activities contribute to civic skills. While political discussions occur less often in after-school activities (Conover and Searing 2000, 111), certain kinds of extracurriculars develop interpersonal, leadership, and participatory skills that are important to citizenship and politics (Niemi and Junn 1998, ch. 5; Glanville 1999). **In this research, we analyze a mock or simulated legislative debate and consider how such activities might contribute to persistent gender differences observed in political participation in adulthood among political elites.**

Extracurricular Activities and Political Learning

Conover and Searing (2000) find that high school students engage in serious conversations about political issues primarily in the classroom. In fact, 80.9 percent of students "never" or "rarely" engage in serious discussions of political issues during after-school activities, and only 36.4 percent "sometimes" or "often" discuss politics outside of classroom situations (111). In spite of this paucity of political content in non-instructional settings, extra curricular activities are strongly predictive of future adult political participation.

Research suggests that high school students who participate in certain kinds of civic-oriented extracurriculars in high school are more likely to engage in civic activities in adulthood. Niemi and Chapman (1998) find that students who participate in student government or community service (35 hours a week or more during the school year) have higher levels of civic development (i.e. political knowledge, efficacy, tolerance and skills) than non-participating students. At the same time, student government activists tend to be

most confident in their political participation skills compared to both community service activists and non-participating students (31-36). Similarly, Verba et al (1995) find that the roots of adult civic involvement stem more from participation in secondary school student government and to a lesser extent from involvement in other clubs, but not from involvement in high school sports (424-425). Scholars conclude that "instrumental" extracurriculars[1] such as student government, debate, the school newspaper or vocational clubs seem to have the strongest association with later political activities (Hanks 1981, Youniss et al, 1999, Glanville 1999).

Niemi and Junn (1998) find that students who participate in certain types of extracurriculars also experience increases in political knowledge. Drawing on data from the 1988 NAEP Civics Assessment, they find that students participating in mock elections, councils, and trials are better able to answer factual questions, to explain the president's responsibilities and more likely to believe that elections contribute to accountability in government. [2]

In sum, and not surprisingly, high school activities that promote explicit political content and organizational skills seem to be most important and thus warrant further investigation to discover what students are learning in such activities.

Gender Differences in Political Engagement

The historic under-representation of women in elected office in the U.S. mirrors a persistent gender gap with respect to various aspects of political engagement. Simply put, women tend to be less knowledgeable, less efficacious, and less interested in politics

(Beckwith 1986, Bennett and Bennett 1989, Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996, Verba et al 1997, Verba et al 1995.) The causal explanations of the gap vary and prompt debate (e.g.unequal resources, differences in social roles, predispositions toward certain behavioral tendencies, traditional male hegemony in the political world, etc.), but the enduring nature of gender differences is not disputed. Using 1988 and 1989 survey responses of adults, Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) find women on average to be less able to answer questions on local, national and international people and events, and they conclude that knowledge levels of women have not changed much since the 1950s (163). Also using adult-age survey data from 1989, Verba et al (1995) report similar results, and in related research Verba et al (1997) conclude that the masculine advantage in political information is "especially striking" (1069).

There is some evidence that the knowledge gap may be closing. Niemi and Junn (1998) focus on high school-age youth using the 1988 NAEP Civics Assessment and find the gender differences in political knowledge among high school seniors to exist but to be small overall and mixed or non-existent on specific topics (104-109). Niemi and Junn (1998, 135) also conclude that girls seem to learn more from their participation in civics-related exercises than do boys. In the most recent version of the NAEP civics assessment (1998), the civics report card reveals females students score higher on average than their peers at grades eight and 12, but the percentage of males and females who reached or exceeded the "proficient level" was not statistically different (NAEP 1998). If, as these data suggest, the gender gap of political knowledge is closing among young people and if participation in extra-curricular activities play a role in contributing to the political knowledge of young

women, then such activities warrant further examination to understand what is being learned and how gender may shape these experiences and future representation.

How To Investigate Political Learning

Our understanding of how extracurricular activities contribute to citizenship and political engagement in adulthood is incomplete. Most of what is known about the relationship between high school extracurricular activities and adult political participation comes from national panel surveys. Analysts, however, caution about drawing causal relationships and note that few specific programs (e.g. service-learning programs, citizenship education, community service activities) have been rigorously evaluated or subjected to experimental designs to assess their actual contribution to civic outcomes (Zaff and Michelsen 2001, 14-17). Flanagan and Faison (2001) note that "there is very little known about program effectiveness ... because the civic goals of youth programs have rarely been evaluated" (3).

While representative longitudinal surveys and program evaluations yield valuable insights, socialization to citizenship and political leadership may also be understood as a process which "cannot be studied by such methods and ... must be studied by observing it as it progresses, i.e., in the field" (Sigel 1989, 468). Similarly, Conover and Searing (2000) call for "studying citizenship as a practice" and to focus less on causal explanations and more on interpretive and developmental explanations of political behavior (93). Observational research can reveal insights about the gendered dynamics and context of political learning as it unfolds and tell us "a great deal about the role that different structures and settings

play in socializing adults" (Sigel 1989, 469). **A review of both the political socialization literature as well as educational journals reveals only one study of the gendered structure and dynamics of socializing extra-curricular activities. In that investigation, which is limited by its scope to a single local event, Rosenthal et al (2001) find that extra-curriculars which simulate political events are not gender neutral and are dominated by male adolescents, even though female delegates attend in equal numbers and present similar backgrounds, preparatory experiences, and motivations.**

In this study, we focus on what takes place in an extra-curricular activity that requires relatively-sophisticated participation skills and political knowledge. We seek to understand how such activities might inculcate other lessons about political participation, which might influence future political engagement and leadership. Specifically, we analyze the gender dynamics, interaction and success of students participating in a national competition of legislative debate.

The first research question focuses on the association of participant gender to success in the event and on the association of sex to other potential predictors of success. We are interested in how males and females fare in the competition and under what circumstances. The second question investigates associations between one's style of participation with sex, proportion of women on event committees, and success. Here, we are interested in what speaking styles emerge as successful, whether female participants experience and engage in the debate in the same manner as do males, and to what extent the proportion of women participating affects the event outcomes.

Research Setting

Data come from the 2001 John C. Stennis National Student Congress sponsored by the National Forensic League (NFL), the governing association for high school and collegiate speech and debate competitions. The mock legislative debate competition was held over five days in Oklahoma City in June 2001 and attracted 425 participants from 42 different states. Participants qualified for the national event by competing in state-level competitions, where the number of participants advancing to the national tournament depends not on the population of the state but rather upon the number of students involved in state-level legislative debate contests. For example, Nevada sent nine competitors while New York sent ten. More than one third of the competitors come from states with large populations or close proximity to the competition site: Texas (40), California (36), Missouri (28), Kansas (25), Colorado (20), and Florida (17). Most participants are high school seniors and juniors, though a handful are high school sophomores.

Rounds of legislative debate operate under strict rules of procedure that encourage participation, insure equal opportunity to speak, and require broad-based involvement. All participants compete in the two-day preliminary round of competition, and then based on their scores, the top 25 percent of the participants advance to two days of semi-final rounds. The 25 percent with the highest scores in semi-finals are selected for the one-day final round. Ultimately, nine top finishers are designated. In each round, participants are grouped randomly with approximately 24 other students for purposes of engaging in debate. All contestants are provided with resolutions in advance of the competition in order to do research and prepare speeches. At the competition, speakers are allocated three minutes per turn, and speeches must

alternate between affirmative and negative positions. Presiding officers must call upon speakers with fewer turns before recognizing more frequent speakers. A maximum of five speeches are allowed by a participant in a round, and approximately 70 percent of the participants must take a turn before presiding officers may call on participants for second speeches. Two judges (one male and one female) independently score the participants and cumulative scores are calculated using a formula that controls for the number of speaking terms taken.

The data reported in this paper come from observing all of the competitors for a period of either four-and-a-half or five-and-a-half hours during the preliminary rounds. Each round was observed by two trained coders. Coders tracked data for each session relating to the number and characteristics of participants (i.e. sex and race), the topic of the resolution under debate, positions taken for and against the resolution, and the speaking order of the participants. Coders also recorded a variety of verbal behaviors (references given to and received from other speakers, supporting and rebutting comments) and nonverbal behaviors (gestures, mobility, looking while speaking, demeanor) for each speaker. Coder judgements on the more subjective variables of verbal and nonverbal behavior were well correlated, and inter-coder reliability ranged from Alpha = .714 to .947 on these variables.

Variables

Success in debate. In the text that follows, study variables are presented in capitals (e.g. Sex, Proportion of Women, etc.). Success is operationalized by three variables. The dichotomous variable Qualification is the primary measure of success. It measures whether the participant advances beyond the first round of debate (0 = does not qualify, 1 = qualifies). Level

of Advancement categorizes participant advancement in the entire competition as: 0 = does not qualify, 1 = qualifies for second round, 2 = qualifies for third round, and 3 = finishes in the top nine of the final round. Score is the number of points assigned to participants by judges during the qualifying (first) round of competition.

The key independent variable is Sex of participant (Male = 0, Female = 1). Participants are assigned to one of 18 committees, nine each for House and Senate. Committee sizes are very nearly equal, ranging from minimum of 22 members to a maximum of 26. The possible role of Committee on success is examined. In particular, analyses examine whether the Proportion of Women on a committee: 1) predicts success and 2) predicts success differentially for female and male participants (Kanter 1977, Yoder 1991).

Other variables include: Ethnicity (white, African-American, Asian-American, non-white other than African-American or Asian-American, and unknown), Experience (the number of prior times the participant had participated in the NFL national tourney), Legislative Chamber (House or Senate), and Debate Topic (political reform, technology, defense and foreign policy, environment, families and social welfare, criminal justice, and civil rights), Position taken (affirmative versus negative), and Number of Speaking Turns taken. Assessments of Ethnicity were made visually and by surname by coders, and when coders' judgements disagreed, Ethnicity was coded as unknown. Only one participant had participated in three prior events, therefore Experience was coded as a three-category variable (0 = no prior event, 1 = one prior event, 2 = two or more prior events).

Participatory Style. Eleven participatory style variables, some of which are summations of others, are examined. Five style variables are based on counts of events/behaviors. Supporting

Speech sums the count of comments that affirm, reinforce, agree with or support another speaker. Rebutting Speech reflects the count of comments that refute, question, disagree with or reject speech given by a prior speaker. References Given counts the number of times a participant specifically refers to others in a debate on a resolution, and References Received counts the number of time a participant is directly referenced by others. Total References is formed by summing (transformed) References Received and (transformed) References Given. Total References, in effect, reflect the extent to which participants are engaged with and by others in the event. Each of the four just-mentioned count variables evidenced a positive skew. As such, these variables were transformed as follows: the number "1" was added and then the natural log was computed.

The nonverbal style variables are based on four-category ordinal codes. Nonverbal Dominance is formed by summing Mobility, Gestures, Demeanor and Looking While Speaking. Mobility represents gross motor movement around the room and into other participants' personal space (0 = no movement , 1 = limited, 2 = frequent , 3 = extensive and commanding). Gestures record fine motor, speech-related and demonstrative hand movements (0 =no gestures, 1 = limited, 2 = frequent, 3 = extensive and emphatic). Looking While Speaking assesses a speaker's visual command and attempts to make personal eye contact with others (0 = no visual contact, 1 = limited to less than 1/3 of room, 2 = frequent but less than 2/3 of room, 3 = extensive and sustained throughout the room) . Demeanor represents a general affect of superiority communicated by tone of voice and facial displays (0 = no superior affect, 1 = limited, 2 = frequent, 3 = extensive). Two variables capture a speaker's verbal control of the floor: Time Speaking (0 = less than one minute, 1 = less than two minutes, 2 = less than three minutes,

3 = used entire time) and Yields to Questions (0= yes, 1= no). Verbal Dominance is formed by summing Time Speaking and Yields to Questions.

Units of Analysis and Multilevel Considerations.

The unit of analysis for analyses that predict success in debate is the participant. Some of the 425 participants took more than one speaking turn; in total, they took 679 during the observation period. The unit of analysis for analyses that predict participatory style is the speaking turn.

The 425 study participants competed in the qualifying or first round on 18 separate committees. Stated differently, participants are nested or clustered within committees. Analyses, which fail to take this nesting into account, may produce inaccurate probabilities. Specifically, where an outcome variable varies according to committee, the risk and expectation is for probability levels that are too liberal (for instance, a test probability of, say, $p = .04$, that, in reality, conveys some higher probability, say $p = .08$ or $p = .12$, etc.). To adjust for the nesting, a multilevel modeling approach is used (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002; Goldstein, 1995) in selected analyses.

The analyses of success require a two-level model with level one being the participant and level two being the committee. The analyses of participatory style require a three-level model: level one = speaking turn, level two = participant, level three = committee. For two-level models, Hox (2002) recommends a minimum level-two sample size of about 30, though for estimates of fixed effects (the focus of this paper) a level-two sample size as small as 10 can yield reasonably accurate probabilities. In sum, the committee-level sample size of 18 is within

the range of the recommended minimums. The multilevel analyses presented here likely yield probabilities that are modestly too liberal. These probabilities are less liberal or lower than would have been the case for probabilities from traditional statistical approaches (e.g., ordinary least squares [OLS] regression).

Results: Success in Debate

Sex and Success: Women are distinctly under-represented among participants. Only 30% (126 of 425) participants are women, a percentage that differs significantly from 50%, χ^2 (1) = 70.42, p = .000. Women fared worse on both categorical measures of success. Thus, 31% of men (94 of 299) in contrast to 20% of women (25 of 126) qualified for the second round of competition, χ^2 (1) = 5.91, p = .015. Level of Advancement evidences a statistically significant directional relationship to Sex with men more often advancing to higher rounds, Kendall's tau-$_b$ = -.112, t = 2.58, p = 010. Table 1 presents Level of Advancement by Sex as well as the percentage of females at each level of competition. Women are increasingly under-represented at each successive round. Thus, as Table 1 conveys, women represent 30% of event participants, 21% of second round (or above) qualifiers, 19% of third round (or above) qualifiers, and 17% of top finishers.

As mentioned above, where an outcome varies by Committee, statistical probabilities from traditional approaches will be inaccurate. Neither Qualification nor Level of Advancement varies by Committee. Thus, a chi-square test indicated no association between qualification and committee, χ^2 (17) = 3.53, p = 1 .00. Also, a one-way ANOVA with Level of Advancement as the dependent variable and Committee as the grouping factor was not significant, F (17,405) =

0.493, $p = .956$. In sum, given the non-significant associations of Committee with Qualification and Level of Advancement, specialized multilevel analyses are not needed for these variables. Though the mean Score for men in the qualifying round was higher than that for women, this difference did not reach significance (women: $\bar{X} = 42.0$, $s = 6.8$, $n = 124$; men: $\bar{X} = 43.0$, $s = 7.7$, $n = 299$; $t(421) = 1.22$, $p = .131$). In other words, while males and females did not differ significantly in their scores, they also did not advance in equal proportions to the next round of competition. A one-way ANOVA with Score as dependent and Committee as the grouping factor was significant, $F(17,405) = 13.3$, $p = .000$. The significant variation associated with Committee indicates that a multilevel approach is needed for analyses that predict Score.

TABLE 1 about here

Other Predictors of Success. Prior Experience in the event was highly predictive of Qualification. Twenty-three percent of those with no prior experience, (85 of 282), 52% of those with one year of experience (26 of 50) and 100% of those with two or more years of experience (8 of 8) qualified for the second round, $\chi^2(2) = 39.12$, $p = .000$. Qualification for the second round was not significantly associated with Ethnicity, $\chi^2(3) = 3.028$, $p = .387$. Interestingly, nonwhite participants qualified for the second round somewhat more often (33%, 24 of 72) than did white participants (27%, 94 of 349), a non-significant difference, $\chi^2(1) = 1.212$, $p = .271$. Neither Chamber , $\chi^2(1) = 1.437$, $p = .231$, nor Position (affirmative versus negative) $\chi^2(1) = 0.757$, $p = .384$, predicted Qualification. (The unit of analysis for Position was the speaking turn.)

Associations with Sex: Though there was a modest trend towards greater prior Experience for men than for women, Experience did not differ significantly by Sex. Among

women 90% (113 of 126) had not participated previously, 9% had participated once (11 of 126), and 2% had participated twice (2 of 126). For men these percentages were respectively: 85% (45 of 299), 13% (39 of 299), and 2% (6 of 299). Kendall's tau_b for the Experience/Sex association was -0.062, $p = .170$. While Sex was not associated with Experience, there was an association between Chamber and Sex. Women were significantly more likely to participate in the House (81 of 126 = 64%) than in the Senate (45 of 126 = 36%), while males were evenly divided between the two: 153 of 299 (51%) males competed in the House and 146 (49%) competed in the Senate ($\chi^2(1) = 6.162$, $p = .013$). Theoretically, the NFL senate competition includes more experienced debaters and is thought to have a slightly higher level of competition and this is borne out by the significantly larger percentage of participants who are first time competitors in the House (91%) compared with the Senate (80%) ($\chi^2(2) = 9.653$, $p = .008$).

Table 2 presents Debate Topic by Sex and reveals significant association, $\chi^2(6) = 16.247$ $p = .013$. In particular, women spoke more often on family and social welfare resolutions and men more often on technology and defense and foreign policy. Affirmative or negative Position, $\chi^2(1) = 1.014$, $p = .314$, was not associated with Sex. (The unit of analysis for Debate Topic and for Position was the speaking turn.)

TABLE 2 about here

Multivariate Analysis

Of particular theoretical interest was whether a higher proportion of women on a Committee correlated with improved success for women participants (Kanter 1977, Yoder 1991). The proportion of women on Committees ranged from .11 to .48 ($\bar{X} = 0.297$, $s = .0955$, $N = 18$) Separate analyses were run with the three success measures as dependent variables and

Sex, Proportion of Women, and Sex*Proportion of Women (interaction term) as independent variables. Logistic regression was performed for Qualification. OLS regression was performed for Level of Advancement and Score. The interaction term was not significant in the Level of Advancement and Qualification regressions. The regression for Score (which also includes Experience as a predictor) offered modest support for an interaction effect involving Sex and Proportion of Women. Consistent with a critical mass hypothesis, the interaction suggested that higher proportions of women on committees benefitted women participants. These OLS results are presented in the left side of Table 3. Given a one-tailed test, the interaction is significant ($p = .04$). In multilevel modeling (see right side of Table 3), however, the interaction is no longer significant.

Table 3 about here

The critical mass hypothesis was examined for both African-American and Asian-American participants. There was no suggestion that increased proportions of same-ethnicity participants increased the likelihood of success for these groups. As the proportion of study participants in these groups was very low, these analyses had limited statistical power.

Participatory Style

Table 4 presents associations of the participatory style variables to Sex as well as significance levels from other analyses. Though several participatory style variables were log-transformed (see "Participatory Style" section within the Methods section), means and standard deviations presented in Table 4 represent these variables prior to transformation. On the other hand, all statistical analyses were carried out on the transformed variables.

Five styles evidence significant (or nearly so) associations with Sex: Mobility, Gestures, Nonverbal Dominance, Time, and Verbal Dominance. Each evidences a lower mean for women than for men. Indeed (though six differences are not significant), all eleven style variables evidence this pattern. Overall, the significant association of the global measures of Verbal Dominance and Nonverbal Dominance with Sex and the general pattern of results underscore that the female participants are less likely to adopt dominant behaviors in the event. More importantly, dominance is also associated with success.

Eight of the eleven style variables (see Table 4) are significantly associated with Qualification for the second round. Again, the summative measures of dominance in verbal and nonverbal behavior are significantly associated with success. In each case, higher style scores predict greater likelihood of Qualification. Significant (or nearly so) positive interactions involving Sex and Qualification also were found for References Given and for Rebutting Comments. The most straightforward interpretation of these interactions is that these participatory styles are more instrumental to the success of women than to that of men; in other words, engaging in rebutting speech and giving references helped all speakers to qualify for the next round, but benefitted women more than men.

Table 4 also presents significance levels from analyses that examine whether, when Sex is controlled for, the Proportion of Women in a group predicts participatory style. Proportion of Women is significantly associated (or nearly so) with three style variables: Looking While Speaking, Mobility, and Nonverbal Dominance. Though coefficients are not presented in Table 4 (and though most coefficients are not significant), all eleven style variables evidenced, controlling for Sex, negative associations to Proportion of Women. The final significance levels

presented in Table 4 are those from analyses probing for interactions between Proportion of Women and Sex. Only Time Speaking evidences an interaction effect; as Proportion of Women increases, Time Speaking decreases to a greater degree for women than for men. Given that only Time Speaking evidences an interaction, the main effect of Proportion of Women rather than its interaction with Sex stands out. As Proportion of Women increases, participatory style tends to shift for *all* participants, that is, for *both* sexes. Stated differently, as Proportion of Women increases women and men alike tend towards less masculine participatory styles.

All regressions on participatory style used a three-level model (speaking turn, participant, committee). The dependent variable was always the participatory style variable.

Discussion

Behind our analysis is a larger question of how participation in extra-curricular activities might contribute to the historic and continuing under-representation of women in elected political leadership. Verba et al (1997) find that the presence of female politicians in a state enhances political knowledge among women, and political knowledge gaps may be narrowing among younger adults as noted earlier. Nonetheless, women still make up only 14 percent of the current U.S. Congress and 21 percent of state legislators, and among young elected leaders (814 members of Congress, statewide elected officers, state legislators, and mayors of larger cities who are age 35 years or younger) women still comprise only 14 percent (Eagleton 2003). In a sense, our research investigates whether there are important gendered lessons learned in elite extra-curricular political activities

that might be part of the puzzle of representation in elite level politics and political leadership.

Clearly, the most important finding of this research is that women are initially under-represented among participants in the competition and become increasingly less well-represented at each successive round. Arguably the young women participating in the competition learn that they (or other adolescent females) are not as well qualified to engage in legislative debate and are judged less competent at the skills of legislative debate.

Second, the data suggest that even in adolescent simulations of public policy debates, agentic authority already has gendered overtones. Females speak more often on social welfare issues and family policy and males speak more often on defense and foreign policy issues. When the proportion of females on a committee increases, the participants all adopt somewhat less masculine participatory styles, and women use less of their speaking time even as their proportion of membership on committees increases.

Third, success depends on masculine norms of behavior and experience with both traits having the potential to reinforce women's disadvantage. Prior experience and dominant behavior (both verbal and nonverbal) predict greater likelihood of success in the competition. While a slightly higher percentage of males come to the event with prior experience, overall the young men and women did not differ significantly in terms of experience. The young men and women did differ significantly, however, in terms of behavioral styles with women demonstrating generally less dominant speaking styles. When women did engage in more aggressive speaking behavior – for example, rebutting, refuting, questioning, and disagreeing or referring to others in a debate – they increased their likelihood of advancing in the competition even moreso than the

men. Clearly, more masculine aggressive behavior is required and rewarded. What cannot be captured in these numbers are the overt displays of masculinity – high fives, chest butts, and locker room bravado – which were also observed by the coders. Successful behavior in this elite competition is stereotypically male behavior. Alternatively, male behavior is rewarded with success in advancing in the competition. It bears repeating that those young women who aggressively engaged in rebutting speech and giving references benefitted more than the young men in terms of success.

In this event, societal gender status hierarchies are reproduced. Ridgeway (2001) argues that gender status hierarchy "tightens the relationship between stereotypes and the enactment of leadership" and in particular reinforces "impressions of agentic competence versus reactive communality" attributed to men and women, respectively (640). The question which cannot be answered by this analysis becomes whether the competitors are rewarded for who they are and performing consistent with gender status expectations or who they are judged to be as observed by others who also have deeply embedded gender expectations. In other words, as Ridgeway notes, gender status beliefs affect the individual's own task behavior as well as the evaluation of that behavior by others (643). In either case, the competitive simulation of legislative debate sponsored by the National Forensics League is reproducing a preference for and rewarding masculine behavior in political involvement.

Conclusion

The National Forensics League's student congress reinscribes the masculinity existing in the adult world of politics. What is being learned by the competitors is a particular preference for

masculine behavior and a context in which women continue to be under-represented and less successful. As Yoder (2001) notes, leadership is gendered as is the social context within which leadership occurs. Thus,

> How women enact their role as leader is inextricably intertwined with the basic realization that they are women, bringing with it all the stereotypic baggage that comes with gender roles ... social context itself [also] is gendered.... The gender composition of the group, task characteristics, and shifting standards are examples of contextual variations that ultimately form a setting that is more or less congenial to women (815).

Since politically significant extracurriculars seem to be a positive force for shaping future leaders and developing civic skills, the re-creation of gender state hierarchies and inequality should be a concern for those who promote citizenship education through such events.

Table 1
Representation of Women by Level of Advancement

(Highest) Level of Advancement	Women		Men		Percentage of Females at Each Level of Competition
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
First Round	101	80	205	69	30 (126 of 425)
Second Round	16	13	53	18	21 (25 of 119)
Third Round	6	5	24	8	19 (9 of 48)
Top "9" Finisher	3	2	15	5	17 (3 of 18)

Note: Highest level of advancement was missing for two men. Both qualified for the second round. Percentage advancing figures have been adjusted accordingly.

Table 2
Debate Topic by Sex

Topic	Men		Women	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Political Reform	39	8	10	5
Technology	11	2	2	1
Defense and Foreign Policy	183	39	60	30
Environment	44	9	19	10
Families and Social Welfare	99	21	65	33
Criminal Justice	33	7	21	11
Civil Rights	60	13	23	12

Table 3
OLS and Multilevel Regressions on Score

Predictor	OLS			Multilevel		
	B	Std. Err.	Sig.	*B*	Std. Err.	Sig.
Constant	42.76	1.32	.000	42.28	3.75	.000
Sex (0=Male, 1=Female)	-5.79	3.02	.056	-2.94	2.52	.244
Proportion of Women	-2.62	4.37	.549	-0.56	12.08	.964
Interaction of Sex and Proportion of Women	16.03	9.18	.081	7.21	7.68	.348
Experience (3 categories)	5.55	0.85	.000	5.41	0.68	.000

Table 4
Participatory Style by Sex and Significance Levels from Selected Analyses

Style	Women			Men		
	Mean	S	*n*	Mean	S	*n*
Supporting Comments[a]	0.83	1.49	203	0.90	1.47	473
Rebutting Comments[a] $^{+++\,\&}$	1.39	1.70	203	1.48	1.71	473
Total References[b] $^{++}$	1.88	2.16	191	2.14	2.10	445
References Given[a] $^{++\,\&\&}$	1.02	1.23	191	1.16	1.97	445
References Received[a]	0.86	1.93	191	0.98	1.74	444
Verbal Dominance $^{*\ +++}$	3.30	1.11	179	3.53	1.07	409
Time $^{*\ +++\ \#\#}$	2.60	0.70	205	2.71	0.53	474
Nonverbal Dominance $^{**\ +++\ \wedge\wedge\wedge}$	4.35	1.98	204	5.03	1.97	469
Gestures $^{**\ +++}$	1.50	0.82	204	1.77	0.84	470
Mobility $^{**\ +++\ \wedge}$	0.68	0.89	204	0.95	1.03	470
Demeanor	0.75	0.89	204	0.84	0.93	470
Looking While Speaking $^{+++\ \wedge\wedge}$	2.16	0.89	204	2.31	0.80	471

a Means and standard deviations represent variable prior to its (log)transformation. Statistical tests performed on transformed variable.

b Means and standard deviations convey summation of References Given and References received prior to (log)transformation of these variables. Statistical tests performed on transformed variable as described in Methods section.

$^{*}p \leq .10$, $^{**}p \leq .05$, $^{***}p \leq .01$; astericks pertain to bivariate tests involving Sex
$^{+}p \leq .10$, $^{++}p \leq .05$, $^{++}+\ p \leq .01$; plus symbols pertain to bivariate tests involving Qualification
$^{\&}p \leq .10$, $^{\&\&}p \leq .05$, $^{\&\&\&}p \leq .01$; ampersands pertain to tests of interaction of Sex and Qualification (with Sex and Qualification controlled for)
$\wedge p \leq .10$, $\wedge p \leq .05$, $\wedge\wedge\wedge\ p \leq .01$; carats pertain to tests involving Proportion of Women (with Sex controlled for)
$^{\#}p \leq .10$, $^{\#\#}p \leq .05$, $^{\#\#\#}p \leq .01$; number signs pertain to tests of interaction of Sex and Proportion of Women (with Sex and Proportion of Women controlled for)

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ENDNOTES

1. More "expressive" extracurricular activities would include sports, the arts, and social affinity groups.

2. The 1988 NAEP question read: "How often have you participated in mock or imitation elections, governmental bodies (like a council, legislature, or Congress), or trials?" Niemi and Junn (1998) interpret such activities as school-related for purposes of their analysis but acknowledge that the question may also be interpreted as non-school activities. The question wording presents no particular ambiguity to this research as it focuses on extra-curriculars. In the 1988 NAEP, 48% of the students say that they had participated in simulated political activities at least once (Niemi and Junn 1998, 96).

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